



SIERRA CLUB

Connecticut Chapter
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Testimony Before the Children Committee 2.7.23

Dear Children Committee Chairs Linehan and Maher, Vice-Chairs Ketit and Kushner and Ranking Members Dauphinais and Seminara, and distinguished members of the Children Committee,

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.

The Sierra Club is committed to defending everyone's right to a healthy world by tackling the serious challenges of a warming climate, unprecedented levels of pollution, the waste management crisis, biodiversity loss, and the dangers of toxics.

SB 929- AN ACT EXPANDING SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE FREE SCHOOL MEALS TO ALL STUDENTS

Sierra Club Connecticut supports Senate Bill Number 929. Food insecurity affects so many Connecticut families. All children deserve a healthy, nutritious breakfast and lunch, regardless of their ability to pay for it. Studies have shown that properly fed students learn better, pay attention, and have less behavioral issues.

During the pandemic, all students received free lunch. This increased participation in the school lunch program and got rid of any stigma attached to free/reduced lunches. It got rid of so-called "lunch-debt" for students and led to better academic outcomes. School districts benefit from not having to worry about school lunch finances and are then freed up to invest in other programs, like farms to schools.

Sierra Club supports all our children's right to live healthy and safe lives. This includes being well-fed, well-educated, safe from pollution and toxics. In addition to being provided with breakfast and lunch, we ask that you also consider legislation this session that will ensure that children are not exposed to the harmful effects of plastic pollution when serving the meals.

Thank you for consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

Ann Gadwah, Advocacy and Outreach Organizer
Sierra Club Connecticut